

## 5 Claims

1. A multiplayer gaming system usable by a number of participating players to play a multiplayer game, comprising:

10 a plurality of player stations, each player station being usable by a respective participating player to play a separate instance of a same single-player game having a plurality of possible results, the player station enabling the participating player to place a wager on an outcome of the multiplayer game; and

15 an administration facility communicable with each one of the plurality of player stations

characterised in that

the administration facility is operable to determine an outcome of the multiplayer game as a function of the combined results of the separate  
20 instances of the single-player game played at the plurality of player stations, the outcome of the multiplayer game being either a favourable outcome if at least one participating player is determined by the administration facility as being a winner of the multiplayer game, or an unfavourable outcome in which none of the participating players is  
25 determined as being a winner.

2. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1 in which a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played at a  
30 player station in use by a participating player.

3. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 2 in which the administration facility determines an outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game only after completion of the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game for each  
35 participating player, respectively.

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4. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the administration facility awards a prize to the at least one winning player when the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is a favourable outcome.

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5. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 4 in which the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account.

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6. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 5 in which the administration facility establishes a prize pool whose contents are a function of the outcomes of the separate instances of the single-player game played at the plurality of player stations.

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7. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 6 in which the prize awarded to the at least one winning player is one of the contents of the accumulation account, the contents of the accumulation account less a service fee retained by an operator of the multiplayer gaming system, and the contents of the prize pool, the contents of the accumulation account being retained by the operator of the gaming system to fund the prize pool.

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8. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 7 in which the contents of either one of the accumulation account and the prize pool are shared when the accumulation facility determines a plurality of winners in the turn of the multiplayer game.

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9. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of successful results, the plurality of successful results being in ranked order, from least successful to most successful.

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5 10.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 9 in which the administration facility determines the at least one winner of a turn of the multiplayer game to be a participating player who obtains a highest-ranking successful result in a corresponding turn of a respective instance of the single-player game.

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11.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 10 in which the administration facility determines the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game to be a tie when two or more participating players obtain a same highest-ranking successful result of the corresponding turn of their  
15 respective instances of the single-player game or when none of the participating players obtain a successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game.

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12.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 11 in which the administration facility determines the tie as an unfavourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and carries over the contents of the accumulation account to a next turn of the multiplayer game.

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13.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 11 in which the administration facility determines the tie as a favourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and causes the contents of the accumulation account to be shared between the tied players.

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14.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 12 in which the administration facility augments the contents of the accumulation account with player wagers from the next turn of the multiplayer game in the event of a carry over.

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15.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in either one of claims 12 or 14 in which the administration facility carries over the contents of the

5           accumulation account to a next turn of the multiplayer game for a maximum of five consecutive ties.

10           16.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 15 in which the administration facility automatically determines the outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game to be a favourable outcome upon the occurrence of a sixth consecutive tie.

15           17.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which each player station displays the progress of each instance of the single-player game played by a participating player.

20           18.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 2 in which the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game comprising a single turn of the multiplayer game are played either sequentially or simultaneously.

25           19.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which each successful result of an instance of the single-player game is associated with a corresponding prize that is independent of the contents of the accumulation account.

30           20.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 19 in which the administration facility awards a prize to each participating player in the multiplayer game when a highest-ranking successful result occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

35           21.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 19 in which the administration facility awards a prize to each participating player in the multiplayer game when any one of three highest-ranking successful results occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

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22. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in either one of claims 20 or 21 in which the prizes awarded by the administration facility are independent of the contents of the accumulation account.

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23. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the single-player game has a bonus result, the occurrence of the bonus result in any instance of the single-player game enabling any one of:

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(i) participation by the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred, in the next turn of the multiplayer game without requiring a wager,

(ii) payment by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system of a wager on behalf of the participating player in whose instance of the single player game the bonus result occurred, on the next turn of the multiplayer game, and

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(iii) an award of a monetary prize by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system to the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred.

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24. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 2 in which a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises a plurality of turns of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played at a player station in use by a participating player.

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25. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 24 in which each successful result of the single-player game has an associated points value.

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26. A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 25 in which the administration facility accumulates, for each participating player, points

5 associated with any successful result occurring in that player's plurality of turns in that player's instance of the single-player game.

27.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 26 in which the administration facility determines the winner of the turn of the multiplayer  
10 game to be the participating player or participating players with the greatest accumulated point value.

28.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 27 in which the administration facility awards the winner of the turn of the multiplayer  
15 game the contents of the accumulation account or the contents of the accumulation account less the service fee retained by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system.

29.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of claims 24 to 28 in  
20 which the administration facility requires each participating player to decide, prior to commencement of each of the plurality of turns in the single-player game, except the first, whether to continue with the multiplayer game by increasing that player's wager, or to withdraw from the turn of the multiplayer game.

25 30.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 29 in which the administration facility accumulates in the accumulation account the cumulative wagers of all participating players.

30 31.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 30 in which the administration facility retains in the accumulation account the cumulative wagers of any player who withdraws from the turn of the multiplayer game.

32.A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in any one of the preceding  
35 claims in which the single-player game is any one of video slots or video poker.

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33. A method of operation of a multiplayer gaming system, comprising the steps of:

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enabling each one of a plurality of players to participate in a multiplayer game by playing a separate instance of a same single-player game having a plurality of possible results;

enabling each participating player to place a wager on an outcome of the multiplayer game; and

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determining an outcome of the multiplayer game as a function of the combined results of the separate instances of the single-player game, the outcome of the multiplayer game being either a favourable outcome if at least one participating player is determined as being a winner of the multiplayer game, or an unfavourable outcome in which none of the participating players is determined as being a winner.

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34. A method as claimed in claim 33 that includes a step of including in a single turn of the multiplayer game at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played by each participating player.

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35. A method as claimed in claim 34 in which an outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game is determined only after completion of the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game for each participating player, respectively.

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36. A method as claimed in any one of claims 33 to 35 in which a prize is awarded to the at least one winning player when the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is a favourable outcome.

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37. A method as claimed in any one of claims 36 that includes the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account.

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38. A method as claimed in claim 37 in which a prize pool is established in which the contents are a function of the outcomes of the separate instances of the single-player game.

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39. A method as claimed in claim 36 in which the prize awarded to the at least one winning player is one of the contents of the accumulation account, the contents of the accumulation account less a service fee retained by an operator of the multiplayer gaming system, or the contents of a prize pool, the contents of the accumulation account being retained by the operator of the gaming system to fund the prize pool.

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40. A method as claimed in claim 39 in which the contents of either one of the accumulation account and the prize pool are shared when the accumulation facility determines a plurality of winners in the turn of the multiplayer game.

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41. A method as claimed in any one of claims 33 to 40 in which any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of successful results, the plurality of successful results being ranked in order, from least successful to most successful.

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42. A method as claimed in claim 41 in which the at least one winner of a turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be a participating player who obtains a highest-ranking successful result in a corresponding turn of a respective instance of the single-player game.

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43. A method as claimed in claim 42 in which the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be a tie when two or more participating players obtain a same highest-ranking successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game,

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5 or when none of the participating players obtains a successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game.

44.A method as claimed in claim 43 in which the tie is determined as an unfavourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and the contents  
10 of the accumulation account are carried over to a next turn of the multiplayer game.

45.A method as claimed in claim 43 in which the tie is determined as a favourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and the contents of  
15 the accumulation account are shared between the tied players.

46.A method as claimed in claim 44 in which the contents of the accumulation account are augmented with player wagers from the next turn of the multiplayer game in the event of a carry over.

20 47.A method as claimed in either one of claims 44 or 46 in which the contents of the accumulation account are carried over to a next turn of the multiplayer game for a maximum of five consecutive ties.

25 48.A method as claimed in claim 47 in which the outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game is automatically determined as a favourable outcome upon the occurrence of a sixth consecutive tie.

49.A method as claimed in any one of claims 33 to 48 in which the progress  
30 of each instance of the single-player game played by all the participating players is displayed to each participating player.

50.A method as claimed in claim 34 in which the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game  
35 comprising a single turn of the multiplayer game are played sequentially or, alternatively, simultaneously.

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51. A method as claimed in claim 37 in which each successful result of an instance of the single-player game is associated with a corresponding prize that is independent of the contents of the accumulation account.

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52. A method as claimed in claim 51 in which a prize is awarded to each participating player in the multiplayer game when a highest ranking successful result occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

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53. A method as claimed in claim 51 in which a prize is awarded to each participating player in the multiplayer game when any one of three highest-ranking successful results occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

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54. A method as claimed in either one of claims 52 or 53 in which the prizes are awarded independently of the contents of the accumulation account.

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55. A method as claimed in any one of claims 33 to 54 in which the single-player game has a bonus result, the occurrence of the bonus result in any instance of the single-player game enabling any one of:

(i) participation by the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred, in the next turn of the multiplayer game without requiring a wager,

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(ii) payment by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system of a wager on behalf of the participating player in whose instance of the single player game the bonus result occurred, on the next turn of the multiplayer game, and

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(iii) an award of a monetary prize by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system to the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred.

5        56. A method as claimed in claim 34 in which a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises a plurality of turns of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played by each participating player.

10       57. A method as claimed in claim 56 in which a point value is associated with each successful result of the single-player game.

15       58. A method as claimed in claim 57 in which points associated with any successful result occurring in that player's plurality of turns in that player's instance of the single-player game are accumulated, for each participating player.

20       59. A method as claimed in claim 58 in which the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be the participating player, or participating players, with the greatest accumulated point value.

25       60. A method as claimed in claim 59 in which the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game is awarded the contents of the accumulation account or the contents of the accumulation account less the service fee retained by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system.

30       61. A method as claimed in any one of claims 56 to 60 in which each participating player is required to decide, prior to commencement of each of the plurality of turns in the single-player game, except the first, whether to continue with the multiplayer game by increasing that player's wager, or to withdraw from the turn of the multiplayer game.

35       62. A method as claimed in claim 61 in which the cumulative wagers of all participating players and the cumulative wagers of any player who withdraws from the turn of the multiplayer game are accumulated in the accumulation account.